



NAVY HISTORY MATTERS

October 8, 2019

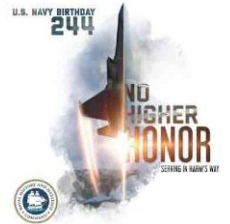


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Welcome to Navy History Matters—our weekly compilation of articles, commentaries, and blogs related to history and heritage. Every week we'll gather the top-interest items from a variety of media and social media sources and then link you to related content at NHHC's website (history.navy.mil), your authoritative source for Navy history.

★ Happy 244th Birthday, U.S. Navy

Throughout the world, U.S. Navy Sailors, veterans, family members, civilians, and friends will celebrate the [Navy's 244th birthday](#) this Sunday, Oct. 13. This year's theme, "No Higher Honor," draws upon the extraordinary service, sacrifice, and heroism of the Sailors who fought during Leyte Gulf's [Battle off Samar](#). On Oct. 25, 1944, a small group of destroyers known as Taffy 3 bravely charged into a line of Japanese battleships to protect American forces landing on the islands. The American destroyers were decimated, but their actions prevented enemy forces from concentrating fire on the landing forces. As a result, American troops eventually took the Philippines. The service of our [World War II](#) shipmates cemented the Navy's legacy; there is no higher honor than to serve and to do so in harm's way. The Sailors of today carry on this legacy. Happy birthday, [U.S. Navy](#)!



★ HRNM Makes Final Preparations Prior to Reopening

Scheduled to reopen Oct. 9, the gallery of the [Hampton Roads Naval Museum](#) has been transformed into a new immersive exhibit, *The Ten Thousand-Day War at Sea: The U.S. Navy in Vietnam, 1950–1975*. The new exhibit uses the Navy's historical collections, multiple-media presentations, and interactive components to display the Navy's critical role during the [Vietnam War](#). Choosing the right artifacts to match the museum's intent was critical during the exhibit's creation. "We worked alongside with Hampton Roads Naval Museum staff to make certain we were telling a holistic story," said Jeff Bowdoin, [NHHC Curator Branch](#) head. "Many people understand the riverine contributions to the war effort, though we must look beyond those operations. For instance, the bullet fragment recovered from the [USS Maddox](#) represents an attack on a U.S. Navy destroyer that helped support the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution." In addition to the artifacts, the museum recorded interviews with more than 45 Navy veterans of the war. For more, [read the article](#) by Max Lonzanida.



★ Navy Announces Reestablishment of TM Rating

On Sept. 30, the [Navy announced](#) the reestablishment of the torpedoman's mate rating to renew the pride and [heritage](#) of the submarine torpedoman's mate. "The torpedoman's mate rating was disestablished in 1995, but based on feedback from the fleet we are bringing it back," said Capt. Angela Katson, branch head of Enlisted Force Shaping Plans and Policies. "In the spirit of heritage, and Sailor 2025 initiatives, we are returning to the use of the original torpedoman's mate rating badge." The torpedoman rating, established in 1921, was renamed torpedoman's mate in 1942. Following the extraordinary success of the [submarine force](#) during [World War II](#), the rate remained until 1995 when it was merged into the machinist's mate rating. For more, [read the U.S. Navy release](#).



★ American Archives Month

Each October, the archival community celebrates [American Archives Month](#) with a variety of activities and programs. The month provides an excellent opportunity to educate the public about the work archivists do and why it is so important. All month long, NHHC's Communication and Outreach Division will post content on [our blog](#), [website](#), and social media platforms highlighting the great work Navy archivists do. [NHHC's Archives](#) Branch collects, preserves, protects, and makes available official records and donated personal collections that best embody the U.S. Navy's rich [history](#) and [heritage](#) for present and future generations. Collections often include a variety of materials, such as letters, diaries, notebooks, speeches, scrapbooks, and photographs. For more, download the new [U.S. Navy Archives infographic](#).



★ Ombudsman Program Looks Toward 50th Anniversary in 2020

The Navy Family Ombudsman Program is set to celebrate its 50th anniversary next year on Sept. 14. In 1970, then Chief of Naval Operations Adm. [Elmo R. Zumwalt Jr.](#) established the program with the issuance of [Z-Gram 24](#). The order emphasized the importance of the Navy spouse as a member of the Navy team and established a procedure that gave spouses the opportunity to voice their complaints, viewpoints, and suggestions to the commanding officer. By doing so, Zumwalt acknowledged the vital role spouses play and provided them an "official representative to express their view to commanding officers and base commanders." Leading up to the anniversary, the Commander, Navy Installations Command's (CNIC) Ombudsman Program will share information on the role they fulfill for the Navy family. For more, [read the U.S. Navy release](#).

in the basement of a log cabin he purchased. The now-deceased president of the company that manufactured Recordgraph had once owned the cabin. For more, [read the story](#) in *The Washington Post*.

★ Medal of Honor Museum to be Located in Texas

The foundation for the [National Medal of Honor Museum](#) announced on Oct. 1 that the museum would be built in Arlington, TX. It was originally to be located in Mount Pleasant, SC, aboard [USS Yorktown](#), but Arlington officials made a final successful pitch that includes incorporating the museum in the city's growing entertainment district. Denver was also in the running. Nearly 70 [Medal of Honor](#) recipients are from the region, and about 1.8 million veterans and active-duty personnel live in Texas. Joe Daniels, president and CEO of the foundation, said Arlington is the optimal location to build the museum showcasing the nation's highest medal for valor. It is expected to open in 2024. For more, [read the article](#) in the *Military Times*.



★ Seawolves Gather for Impromptu Reunion

They were a "rag-tag" helicopter squadron commissioned for five years to protect one of Vietnam's most prized transportation routes during the [Vietnam War](#). The all-volunteer Seawolves were established in April 1967 and, in the five years they existed, roughly 2,500 Seawolves operated on the Mekong Delta, with about 44 killed in action, according to former pilot Al George. On Sept. 25, ten Seawolves gathered for an impromptu reunion at Yelm, WA, to watch the documentary "[Scramble the Seawolves](#)" and to reminisce about old times. One of the veterans, Fred Stark, who is an 81-year-old retired petty officer, is not able to travel to the regular reunions, so his old buddies came to his house for the impromptu get-together. Stark said it meant the world to him. "It's a real family..." he said. "It feels good that they were able to think of me and come all this way." For more, [read the article](#) at the *Nisqually Valley News*. For more on [naval aviation](#), go to [NHHC's website](#).



★ NHHC Webpage of the Week

In preparation for the 244th birthday of the U.S. Navy on Oct. 13, this week's webpage of the week is the [Navy Birthday Toolkit](#). On this page, you will find a multitude of information and resources to help prepare for this year's celebration. Included are [Navy logos](#), [planning documents](#), [digital resources](#), and [Navy historical information](#). This year's theme—"No Higher Honor"—draws upon the extraordinary service, sacrifice, and heroism displayed during Leyte Gulf's [Battle off Samar](#) 75 years ago. [New to the toolkit](#) is a [Battle of Leyte Gulf infographic](#) that highlights the four major engagements and examples of heroism in action. Since our nation was founded, the Navy has defended American interests and values around the globe. Make your event special. Use the resources NHHC has to offer, and celebrate the heroism of the Sailors who are part of the world's greatest Navy!



★ Today in Naval History

On Oct. 8, 1955, the sixth [USS Saratoga](#) was launched. In 1972, she was reclassified as a multipurpose aircraft carrier and received the designation CV-60. On May 18, 1972, *Saratoga* arrived at "Yankee Station" and before year's end was on station in the Tonkin Gulf a total of seven times. During the period of Sept 2–19, 1972, *Saratoga's* [naval aviation](#) assets flew more than 800 combat strike missions against targets in North Vietnam. On Oct. 30, 1972, the ship's aircraft flew 83 close air support sorties in just six hours in support of a force of 250 territorials beleaguered by the North Vietnamese. *Saratoga* received one battle star for service during the [Vietnam War](#). In the early 1990s, *Saratoga* participated in [Desert Shield/Desert Storm](#) as well. During that deployment, her VA-35 [A-6E](#) crews used night vision goggles in battle for the first time in the squadron's history during initial strikes against the Iraqis. In 1994, after nearly 40 years in service, *Saratoga* was decommissioned.



For more dates in naval history, including your selected span of dates, see [Year at a Glance](#) at [NHHC's website](#). Be sure to check this page regularly, as content is updated frequently.